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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS



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Lewis Carroll at St. John's University

By August A. Imholtz, Jr.

The Fall meeting of our Society took place in conjunction with the first annual "Conference on Creativity" at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, on October 17th and 18th, 1997. The theme of the conference was "The Creativity of Lewis Carroll": hence our presence. (Since papers were delivered at concurrent sessions, I was not able to attend every session and so have relied on some reports from other participants. I particularly want to thank Francine Abeles, Genevieve Smith, David Schaefer, and Alan Tannenbaum for their help.)

Only a half-hour was allowed for registration on that clear cool Friday afternoon, so when Charlie Lovett, David Schaefer, and I got to St. Benedict's College (essentially the women's college¹), from St. John's (the men's), some four miles up the road, we were just in time to meet Joel Birenbaum leading a group of our members and other people to the opening lecture. Even though we did not yet have our conference badges, we were somehow recognized and, of course, warmly welcomed.

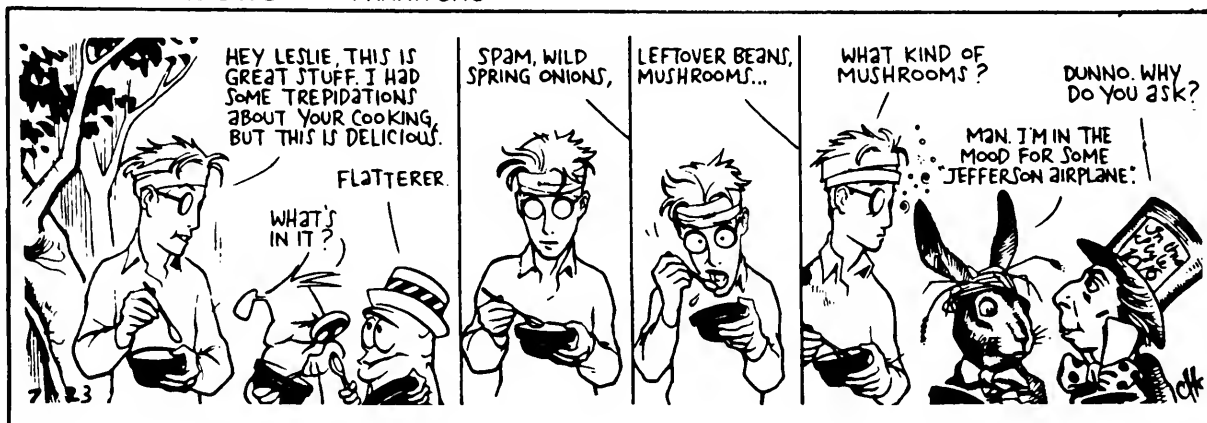
Dr. Michael Hancher, Professor of English at the University of Minnesota, who last spoke to us at Harvard's Houghton Library on May 8th, 1981, about his then forthcoming book *The Tenniel Illustrations to the Alice Books*, delivered the opening lecture entitled "Tenniel's Illustrations and Race at the Great Exhibition of 1851". Tenniel, of course, was John Tenniel, *Punch* artist and illustrator, and the Great Exhibition refers to the Crystal Palace exhibition in London, the first of the modern World's Fairs. On the basis of his illustrations for an edition of *Aesop* in 1848, Prof. Hancher began, John Tenniel had come to the attention of the editors of *Punch*, which in its early days had been a liberal and progressive publication. Only three years later, Tenniel, then a *Punch* staff artist, had the honor of being selected to draw the cover illustration of the three-volume official description and illustrated catalog of the Great Exhibition. If his cartoon for *Punch* Vol. XX showing a toga-clad Punch standing atop a pedestal pointing to the great glass façade of the Crystal Palace in the background and surrounded by a circus of Grandville-like animals is a comic comment on the Great Exhi-

bition, his catalog cover was a far more serious thing. For the exhibition catalog cover, Tenniel depicts the heroization of labor under the protection of St. George and Peace. Statues representing Africa, Asia, Europe, and America represent the four continents with Britannia in the center — much as the Victorians saw the world at mid-century. Figures in shadow are from other cultures; the ones in light are, of course, British. Many subtle features of the Tenniel iconography were convincingly interpreted by Prof. Hancher. For example, he showed how the shape of the headdress on the Indian figure representing America was actually patterned after Hector's helmet in Flaxman's famous illustrations of Homer's *Iliad*. In Tenniel's view, according to Professor Hancher, the great exhibition celebrating the unity of all the races of mankind was really a celebration of one race, the English, rather than all. In addition to analyzing the catalog cover, Hancher discussed Tenniel's handling of the Negro slave statute by Hiram Powers and other aspects of Tenniel's interpretation of the exhibition. As a coda to his lecture, he showed the diversity of races some see in the *Alice* illustrations to the "Mouse's Tale" episode and the "Presentation of the Thimble" and, closer to our hosts in Minnesota, he concluded with some slides of the splendid Christmas *Alice* decorations from a local Minneapolis department store in 1980. Though not directly about Lewis Carroll, Tenniel is unarguably integral to any Carroll studies and this finely illustrated and well-researched lecture showed us another aspect of the Victorian world-view, the world in which Charles Dodgson was growing up.

At 6:30 p.m., still at St. Benedict's College, we enjoyed a delightful reception and Carrollian tea party during which several St. John's students entertained us with a lively setting of the song "In a Place Called Wonderland". The evening concluded with a resounding performance of Carroll poems set to music and some more traditional pieces performed by the Minnesota Center Choral Chamber Singers under the direction of Professor Phil Welter. The songs included the well known "Some Folks Do" and "Beautiful Dreamers" by Stephen Foster, Duke Ellington's "Come Sunday", Irving Fein's *Alice* songs "The Lobster Quadrille" and "Father William" from 1943, a wonderful Latin American "Alle-

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luia" (in Latin) composed in 1970, balanced by Bach's Sixth Motet, and finally the delightful Sam Pottle "Jabberwocky" set to accompaniment by Fisher-Price children's toy musical instruments.

At St. John's University on the shore of Lake Sagatagan on Saturday, the day's events began at 9:00 a.m. with a panel discussing, appropriately, the question of how we understand creativity. Professor Marty Andrews cited John Updike's comment to the effect that creativity is just a plush name for any activity done "right of better". In trying to focus our attention on the different aspects of creativity, he enumerated the "Seven Marks of Creativity" rather like the marks of the Snark:

1. Creativity is more rightly ascribed to acts or works than to individuals
2. Creative insight or illumination often involves the perception of metaphor or analogy
3. There is no algorithm to induce creativity, we can only hope to increase its probability
4. Everyone is creative to some extent, e.g. 70% of our discourse is original to us
5. Creativity may require many different types of courage
6. Hard work and intelligence are necessary in the creative endeavor
7. The time, *καιρός* "kairos", has to be right (especially relevant for encounters of the Snark kind too)

Although this was an interesting shopping list, I did think it helped us only slightly more than the Bellman's list of the five unmistakable marks of the warranted genuine Snarks helped the Baker.

In the second of three talks in this introductory session, Professor Jennifer Galovich illustrated how creativity in mathematical thinking can occur when one applies a known to solve an apparently unrelated problem. As an example, she selected the means by which Archimedes had figured out the relationship between parabolas inscribed within a triangle and the remaining space. I thought I understood this quite clearly until, in summarizing the procedure to Joel Birenbaum, I somehow confused "parabola" with "parallelogram" (after all, they both begin on a "par") and I fear Dodgson (not to mention Archimedes) would have been quite disappointed with me.

Finally, in the third paper of the first session, Professor Michael Livingston addressed the subject of cognitive development in creativity from the point of view of a child learning a language. In a very interesting lecture, he showed how a child's linguistic "mistakes" are often the result of formulating rules. While stressing the all-absorbing nature of the creative process, he hazarded a few characteristics of the "creative person", who: a) is a good planner,

b) has extensive preparation for his or her work, c) expends prodigious amounts of energy, e) tends to be intelligent, f) tends to be ironic or playful, g) has a high level of mental fluency, h) is very conscious of tradition and willing to go beyond it, i) has a high level of education, j) enjoys social position affording time for the activity; and k) is often sad when the work is completed.

Concurrent with the first panel, Fr. Magnus J. Wenninger, O.S.B., led a discussion of a question raised by Lewis Carroll in a letter of May 1897: "Am I right," Carroll had asked, "in thinking that space could be filled (barring certain interstices) with equal spheres, each touching twelve others?" Professor Francine Abeles, Professor David Schaefer, Alan Tannenbaum, and Br. Bradley Jennings spent a fascinating hour interactively trying to understand precisely what

Carroll was asking in this letter. The five of them concluded in agreeing that they understood the question, but not the answer. Since then the question has been put up on the Polyhedron Site on the World Wide Web and several answers have been suggested. Fr. Wenninger, it should be noted, is a world authority on packing polyhedra. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the simulations of Carroll's committee problems presented by Prof. Chuck Rambeck and Jim Murphy which occurred at the same time as the creativity panel and the dodecahedron discussion.

At 11:00 am, Professor Morton N. Cohen delivered the keynote address of the conference, "Lewis Carroll's Creativity", adding something new and stimulating based on his lifelong study of Carroll and

his works. In the first half or so of his lecture, Professor Cohen summarized the major events of Lewis Carroll's life emphasizing again some of the points made in his masterful biography of Carroll, like the centrality of his forthright faith (an excellent point to stress in the surroundings of a Benedictine monastery). In the second half of his talk, however, Prof. Cohen turned specifically to Carroll's creativity. We are all imitators. Lord Chesterfield said "we are in truth more than half what we are by imitation." What then makes an artist? Most of what we term brilliant work is the result of cerebration rather than inspiration. Prof. Cohen distinguished two kinds of artists: 1) visionaries who live constantly in a state of epiphany — a class that includes Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Blake; and 2) lesser mortals who experience epiphanic acts of creation once, twice, or even many times, but do not live in that special ether — they are only visited by epiphanies. In that second class he places Lewis Carroll. The flashes of epiphany do have some terrestrial connections and the fertile ground for Carroll's first epiphanies, which Cohen limits to the *Alice* books and *The Hunting*



of the *Snark*, are these circumstances occurring in close temporal proximity: his professional appointment in mathematics, which grounded his life; his encounter with the three daughters of Dean Henry George Liddell; and his taking up of the new art of photography. The inspirational spark which eventually precipitated the nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark* began with the single line "For the Snark was a Boojum you see", which came to Carroll as he wandered exhausted after sitting all night at the bedside of his sick cousin Charlie Wilcox. To the poem "Jabberwocky" Prof. Cohen, perhaps somewhat reluctantly, accords the status of a "minor epiphany". For these three works are works of inspiration, not objects of imitation: in other words, art.

After lunch, which I found by wandering along corridors, down stairs, around cloisters, and finally entering the refectory through the kitchen, we again began with three concurrent sessions. Fernando J. Soto, operating on the Humpty Dumpty principle that a name must mean something, gave us a delightful etymological tour through some famous Carrollian passages and some less familiar examples of Carroll's multi-level puns in his talk "Carroll's Sense and Nonsense". Although he sometimes pushed his thesis rather far down the list of possible lexical allusions, he did find some very interesting circumstantial evidence for word associations in English dialects, Latin, and Greek. One of the most intriguing examples is Carroll's comment on meeting Lottie Rix when he turned her around looking for a "tremendous lot of hair" — the common Classical Greek word for hair being τριχ "thrix".

At the same time [and one letter away], Professor James Poff was examining insects in the *Alice* books. He commented entymologically [see?] on the caterpillar (the only insect of any importance in Wonderland), and the whole array of insects in *Through the Looking-Glass* from the gnat onward, with an intriguing discussion of the wasp in the suppressed "Wasp in the Wig" chapter. On the wasp's ringlets that waved, he pointed out that wasps do not really have any appreciable head hair but the males of the *Polistes* wasp do have antennae which narrow in a hair-like fashion and form a distinct ring-like structure which the male waves during courtship behavior. Since the wasp had a newspaper it was probably a social wasp and indeed *Polistes* are known as the paper wasps because of the paper they use to construct their nests. Professor Poff, in *Looking-Glass* fashion, ended by observing that the made-up insects are, like the bread and butterfly, food constructs, so he offered us some real insect food: cricket-chip cookies!

While those two papers were being delivered, Stephanie Stoffel gave the second reading of *Alice* excerpts in the Maxine Schaefer Memorial Reading for Children program. Stephanie was introduced to the audience of about 100 parents and children by her own daughter, Lucy Lovett, just as David Schaefer, who had made some introductory remarks to the group about his late wife Maxine Schaefer (a founding member of LCSNA and its secretary for 20 years), was pondering what to say by way of introduction of Stephanie. She read passages from *Alice* to very attentive children for about

45 minutes and then distributed 71 copies of the Books of Wonder edition to the children attending. Each copy contained a bookplate, designed by Jonathan Dixon, reading "The Maxine Schaefer Memorial Children's Outreach Fund" below a drawing of a little girl reading *Alice* framed by a window arch along the sides of which dormice cavort while in the triangular space at the top between the sides of the arch and the rectangular frame can be seen a bathing machine and a teapot.

A reception, to allow authors to sign their books and artist Michael Osterweil, who had painted the posters for the conference as well as a whole sequence of *Alice* paintings, to sign his posters and cards, was held before the afternoon's keynote address by Professor Francine Abeles.

The title of Professor Abeles' lecture was "Lewis Carroll's Mathematical Inventions". She began by pointing out that Dodgson's mathematical work divides into the following categories:

1. Mathematical inventions, the subject of this lecture
2. Standard theoretical treatises, like his *Elementary Treatise on Determinants* or *Curiosa Mathematica, Part I*
3. Puzzles and paradoxes in the realm of what today is called, at least by some, recreational mathematics
4. Logic, best exemplified in *Symbolic Logic* and
5. Textbooks for students.

Professor Abeles decided to focus her remarks on just four different mathematical inventions out of his many: Dodgson's "Letter Register", his cryptographic contributions, his work on the "Automatic Calendar", and his "Lawn Tennis Tournament Rules".

The "Letter Register" probably grew out of Dodgson's desire for precision and the practical need of keeping track of his immense correspondence (estimates of actual number of letters Dodgson wrote vary from 50,000 to 98,000). He wrote more letters than Charles Dickens and Henry James combined, and in the opinion of this writer, probably far more amusing ones. Although the 24 volumes of his letter register have not survived, we do know that the last entry bore the number 98,721. The links by which the letter register is organized are explained in Carroll's little work "Eight or Nine Wise Words about Letter Writing". Professor Abeles, in going through Carroll's instructions for making up this kind of cross-referential register with attenuated content notes, explained how the principles Carroll devised resemble the basic elements used in modern database design, e.g. the link field, in today's database terminology, is represented in Carroll's register by the cross reference (letter number) linking letters on the same subject but having different names. With the help of transparencies, she showed how, for example, the footers and headers in the entries function as forward and backward pointers. Examples of multi-threaded cross-referencing for relating letters on the same subject and a kind of deletion, again to use database terminology, for letters that he was "done with" were illustrated.

If Carroll's interest in the letter register grew at least in part from his practical needs, his interest in ciphers was a reflection of a more widespread interest and requirement, es-

pecially in wartime, for secure transmission of messages by telegraph. In his diary entry for April 22, 1868, Carroll wrote "sitting up at night I invented a new cipher, which I think of calling 'The Telegraph Cipher'." We now know from his previously unpublished diaries that Carroll had also invented two other ciphers ten years earlier. Again with the help of her transparencies, Professor Abeles explained how his periodic polyalphabetic ciphers worked, and, intriguingly, how Carroll anticipated another principle of the computer, *i.e.* his inclusion of information about the decipherment within the enciphered message — this is "the idea of treating instructions as if they were data" and resembles the "stored program" concept of modern computers. [See "*Carroll's Cryptography*" on p.8]

In the March 31, 1887 issue of *Nature* Dodgson published under his famous pseudonym an article called "To Find the Day of the Week for any Given Date" in which he proposed a simple method to compute *mentally* the day of the week for any date. Here is how it works:

Take the given date in 4 portions, *viz.* the number of centuries, the number of years over, the month, and the day of the month. Compute the following 4 items, adding each, when found, to the total of the previous items. When an item or total exceeds 7, divide by 7, and keep the remainder only.

The Century-Item. For Old Style (which ended Sept. 2, 1752) subtract from 18. For New Style (which began Sept. 14, 1752) divide by 4, take overplus from 3, multiply remainder by 2.

The Year-Item. Add together the number of dozens, the overplus, and the number of 4's in the overplus.

The Month-Item. If it begins or ends with a vowel, subtract the number, denoting its place in the year, from 10. This, plus its number of days, gives the item for the following month. The item for January is "0"; for March (the third month), "3"; for December (the twelfth Month), "12".

The Day-Item is the Day of the Month. The total, thus reached, must be corrected, by deducting "1" (first adding 7, if the total be "0"), if the date be January or February in a Leap Year: remembering that every year divisible by 4 is a leap year, excepting the century years, in New Style, when the number of centuries is not so divisible (*e.g.* 1800). The final result gives the day of the week, "0" meaning Sunday, "1" Monday, and so on."

Professor Abeles also explained Dodgson's simplification of Karl Friedrich Gauss' rule, first published in 1800, for finding the date of Easter and, perhaps more intriguingly, of Christian Zeller's "completely arithmetic method for finding the day of the week for any given date in which a function replaces the month table". Dodgson grappled with the attempt to formulate a completely arithmetical algorithm to find the day of the week. He succeeded in devising a formula which worked for the number of days in every month except

February and asked for help from the mathematical community in the *Educational Times* of 1 September, 1897.

Lastly we were treated to a short exposition of Carroll's "Lawn Tennis Tournaments" in which he tried to design a method "in modern terminology, of a triple elimination tournament that captured the essence of what was required, at reduced cost, where cost equals the number of games played." Dodgson had been complaining about the knockout tournament that reliably only chooses the first prize winner with the second and third prizes often being unjustly awarded. Dodgson's method, Professor Abeles explained, can be interpreted as a kind of sorting problem.

In sum, it was clearly demonstrated that Dodgson occupied himself with inventive mathematical thought from the early ciphers composed while he was in his twenties to the calendar question submitted to the mathematical world six months before his death.

Before Professor Abeles' talk I just had time to see one act of the interactive play of "Alice in Wonderland", which was presented in some 35 interactive performances wonderfully directed by Ms. Karin Johnston. Alan Tannebaum and I were about the only adults among some 10 - 15 children who crawled into one of the big inflated scene spaces for the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. That segment was delightful and I believe little Lucy Lovett is planning to share with us her experiences of the whole play.

In the nave of the original church of St. John's Benedictine Monastery at Collegeville, we all (about seventy people) gathered for cocktails and a delicious dinner, serenaded again by Pogi Sumangil and the other members of the Funky Tea Addicts with their "Free Fallin'" and "At the Tea Party". Professor Charles Thornbury of St. John's, organizer of the conference, thanked the many members of the university who had contributed to its success and Joel Birenbaum of our Society, who had mounted exhibits from his own impressive collection, helped schedule speakers, and encouraged so many of us to journey to the auricle of the American heartland. Joel then expressed his thanks to Professor Thornbury for the splendid events of the past two days, the hospitality of the university, and the friendly reception experienced by all of us.

From the narthex of the sometime monastic church, we adjourned to a modern projection room where a number of us were entertained by a selection of films from David Schaefer's private collection ranging from the 1903 Cecil Hepworth film to the 1960ish Three Stooges presentation of "Curly in Wonderland".

As we left the university, we could just barely discern in the growing darkness above Marcel Breuer's concrete bell banner structure towering over the Abbey Church something twinkling like a tea tray in the sky.

¹ Dodgson's "Resident Women-Students" discuss his views on single-sex schools. Saint Benedict and his twin sister Saint Scholastica are an important brother/sister combination in the history of the Church. The cooperation between these two schools is an excellent model of this in action.

Ravings from the Writing Desk of Joel Birenbaum

I am proud to announce that the opening event of the Lewis Carroll Centenary Celebration was a great success. The report on the "Conference on Creativity" was presented previously in this issue, but I would like to discuss one particularly pleasing aspect of it. Unlike our regular LCSNA meetings, the centenary has given us the opportunity to expand the scope of our gatherings to include people of varying levels of interest in Carroll and of all ages, including young children. As in a community, this diversity may dilute the intensity of our focus a bit, but it increases our perspective and adds to our overall enjoyment.

There was something for everyone on the program. There were academic Carroll presentations as well as non-Carroll ones. There were some lighter talks as well as entertaining presentations more loosely linked to Carroll. We even allowed ourselves to have some fun and watch cartoons (blasphemy!). For the children (mostly) a "pod play" was performed that included audience participation. The Maxine Schaefer Memorial reading also entertained the largest audience to date (71 children). I'm sure Maxine would have marked the day with a white stone and I look at these readings as one of the Society's great accomplishments.

In an earlier column of mine I stated that one of my main goals as president was to increase the number of young members in the society. I think we have taken steps in this direction, partially due to: our presence on the World Wide Web; the interest raised by Morton Cohen's biography of Carroll; and the upcoming Centenary. Of course, simply raising the numbers was not my intent. I also want to increase the number of *active* younger members, and there are steps we must take to do this. Age is relative, so let me state that when I talk about younger members I am addressing college-age students and recent graduates (not that you need a degree to be a member).

One of our newer members, Fernando Soto, a graduate philosophy student from Canada, was given the opportunity to make a presentation at one of the concurrent sessions of the St. John's / St. Benedict's conference. His basic thesis is that there is more meaning in Carroll's nonsense than has been discovered to date and that with the help of a Victorian vintage set of dictionaries, these hidden meanings can be discovered. I can hear the collective groan. For some reason, the general membership finds this idea to be distasteful if not downright threatening. Certainly most of us would not want to sit down surrounded by dialect, medical, and foreign language dictionaries to read our favorite children's book. Our instinct tells us that this would absolutely ruin the experience and I couldn't agree more. Mr. Soto is not asking us to do this. He is willing to do it for us and present his findings. What I think we should be willing to do is listen to his arguments, analyze them fairly (not emotionally), arrive at our own conclusions and discuss them in an open forum. If we reject them outright without due consideration, we would effectively be closing the doors on anyone

who didn't agree with our current beliefs. It would be a pretty dull society (and a small one too) if we all had to agree on everything. Again, I'm not saying we have to agree with Fernando's or anyone else's opinion. I'm just saying that, if they have gone to a reasonable amount of effort to verify a hypothesis, we ought to go to some effort to consider it and discuss the pros and cons. Carrying on this debate is one of the main reasons for our existence.

I will present two instances of wordplay that Fernando touched upon. The first was a pun Carroll used in a meeting with Lottie Rix (discussed in August's meeting report on page 4). The point I want to make is that this is a clear case of Carroll's use of a pun. We may not all understand the nature of the pun as we do not all know Greek (or there may be an alternative explanation), but I think we can all agree that a pun was intended. This is obvious and non-threatening nonsense that makes sense. Now Fernando asks us to consider an instance in *Looking-Glass* that he says is also a play on words.

"I only wanted to see what the garden was like, your Majesty—"

"That's right," said the Queen, patting her on the head, which Alice didn't like at all: 'though, when you say "garden" — *I've* seen gardens, compared with which this would be a wilderness.'

Alice didn't dare to argue the point, but went on: '— and I thought I'd try and find my way to the top of that hill —'

'When you say "hill,"' the Queen interrupted, 'I could show you hills, in comparison with which you'd call that a valley.'

'No, I shouldn't,' said Alice, surprised into contradicting her at last: 'a hill *ca'n't* be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense —'

The Red Queen shook her head. 'You may call it "nonsense" if you like,' she said, 'but I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary!'

Now we all look at this as the Queen's use of hyperbole in making comparisons. She is being the kind of person that can always go you one better in any argument. You know, the type of person that says, "If you think *that's* good — well, listen to this." On this level of interpretation, this section works very well. It is funny, clever, and an insight into human nature. Do we need more than this? It is Carroll at his best. Fernando invites us to ask, "What if there is more?" He claims that not only is there more, but Carroll has given us the key when he writes "... that would be as sensible as a dictionary!" What if we could find a dictionary where the definition of hill was the same as the definition for valley? Here is what he found.

HILL - to cover up or over, to wrap, to cover with clothes... (used in Cheshire and Oxford...) from the *English Dialect Dictionary*

HILL - to cover (applied to clothes and other things such as dirt) from *The Folk Speech of South Cheshire*.

VALLEY - a vale, dale... formed like a vale... see VALE

VALE - a valley... perhaps allied to Greek ἑλος "helos": wet, low ground named from its being surrounded by hills, and easily covered with water. Skeat (*An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*) traces this to the Sanskrit *val*, to cover or surround, which became the Latin *vallis*, a vale.

Mr. Soto's position is that both of these words are defined as "to cover". If this is so, then here is a dictionary that would indeed allow you to call a hill a valley. I see you are still skeptical. That's fine, so long as you're skeptical because you don't agree that the definitions of hill and valley as presented are equivalent or so equally importantly that Dodgson would have considered them to be defined the same. Dodgson's knowledge of language was extensive and was used as a source of humor and hidden meanings.

I contend that it would be wrong to dismiss this interpretation on the basis that a double meaning to every bit of nonsense in the *Alice* books would subtract from their quality. I say this because I believe there is a tendency to think this. On the other hand, I believe that the nonsense is of the highest quality without having any meaning whatsoever. I am satisfied with it and do not expect more, but I try not to reject the possibility of more. Whether Fernando Soto is right or wrong, he causes us to look at the texts once again from a different point of view and what can be wrong about that? I hope that this brief discussion of the ideas presented will result in a dialog *via* letters to the editor. I encourage you to add to the debate.

Finally, I want to remind you that our next Centenary meeting will be in New York on March 28, 1998. In conjunction with this meeting we are also planning to spend a day touring New York Alice sights on Friday the 27th, visiting the Rosenbach Library Museum in Philadelphia on the 29th and viewing the Carroll exhibit at Princeton on the 30th. The Maxine Schaefer Memorial reading for children will be held at the Children's Museum on Sunday morning and Morton Cohen will be delivering a lecture at the Morgan Library on Sunday afternoon with a reception for LCSNA members to follow. On Saturday night we will have a formal dinner honoring Morton Cohen for his many contributions to Lewis Carroll scholarship and to the LCSNA. This black-tie affair will be held at the Cornell Club and will be a unique opportunity to enjoy Carrollian entertainment and acknowledge the achievements of a friend.

Make plans now to join us at these centenary celebrations. It will be one hundred years until you get another chance like this.

The CenTennial Year

Many events are being planned for next year, the centenary of Dodgson's death. Some have already begun. A fine list of them is on our home page: follow the link to Centenary 1998, or go directly to <http://www.lewiscarroll.org/cent.html>. Events in the UK and elsewhere are listed there, but as we are the Lewis Carroll Society of North America, just "local" events are listed here:

Nov. 1997 - April, 1998. New York City. Elmer Bobst Library, NYU. Exhibition of items from the Alfred Berol collection.

Jan. 25 - April 12. Princeton, New Jersey. Milberg Gallery in the Firestone Library, Princeton University. Exhibition of items from the Morris Parrish collection.

March 28 -29. LCSNA Spring meeting. Open to the public. Visits to Princeton and the Rosenbach Library.

March 28 - 2:00 pm: meeting at the Bobst Library, NYU. Nina Demurova, Russian translator, will deliver the first Stan Marx Memorial Lecture. Also speaking will be Genevieve Smith and Donald Rackin.

March 28 - 7:00 pm: LCSNA will host a black tie dinner honoring the extensive contributions of Morton Cohen to Carroll studies and the LCSNA. This gala affair will be held at the Cornell Club.

March 29 - A Maxine Schaefer Memorial program for children with activities and a special guest speaker (Christina Björk - Joel can't keep a secret). Morton Cohen will deliver a lecture at the Pierpoint Morgan Library at 2:30 pm.

April 1 - May 29. New York City. Grolier Club. An exhibition of about 75 items from the collection of Jon Lindseth.

May 20 - August 30. New York City. Pierpont Morgan Library. Exhibition of items from the Arthur Houghton collection.

July 15 - 20. Wheaton, IL. "Mythcon XXIX" four day conference on C. S. Lewis and Lewis Carroll. Details on page 14.

August 2 - 8. University of California at Santa Cruz Dickens Project. Week-long conference features the *Alice* books. Details on p. 14.

Nov. 7 - 8. Fall meeting of the LCSNA. Meetings at UCLA and the Huntington Library.

Nov - Jan. Austin, Texas. Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center. Exhibition of items from the Helmut Gernsheim, Warren Weaver, and Byron Sewell collections.

Dec 1, 1998-early 1999. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Rosenbach Library. Exhibition of items from the Rosenbach collection.

Carroll's Cryptography

For most of us, our knowledge of Carroll's attention to cryptography is confined to a printing of "The Alphabet Cipher" in his *Collected Works*. However, his interest in it was deeper, and his contributions to it more significant, than is generally realized. Fortunately for us, a series of articles in *Cryptologia* magazine by Drs. Francine Abeles and Stanley Lipson, both of Kean University, fully explores this hitherto obscure area of his researches.

My involvement with all this began innocently enough, with this innocuous query received via eMail from Carla Maclean, a student at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

"I've been reading *Red Shift* by Alan Garner, unfortunately the last two pages are in Lewis Carroll's code. Any help you could give me in cracking the code would be much appreciated, because then I can finish the book!"

Red Shift is a fantasy/sci-fi "young adult" novel written almost entirely in a dialogue between two "star-crossed lovers", shifting in time from Roman Britain to the present. It was published in the U.K. by Fontana-Lions (Collins) in 1973. The last three pages are a "handwritten" note beginning "P XCDE WAJ. FM KCC CYZ GBHP..." and, although the "Lewis Carroll code" was mentioned earlier, there was no direct citing of the "key-word" (or phrase) which could translate it.

I did what came naturally, of course, which was a Net search, and came up with a site (<http://www.ant.co.uk/~peter/homilies/alta.htm>) which, appropriately, dealt with the efficiency of various search engines, but mentioned *Red Shift*. It was written by Peter Hartley, and I asked him for help. He wrote:

"Yes, I did crack the code. The clue was that sequence of letters (WAJ, if I remember) which was repeated several times throughout the message, at nine-letter intervals. This is a dead giveaway that the keyword is nine letters long.

The other clue was the first sentence: a one-letter word, then four letters, then three... it seemed a fair chance that it says "I love you".

With this you can work out that the keyword is 'Tom's a-cold', the King Lear quote that Tom [the protagonist] was so fond of." [Act III Sc. 4, IV Sc. I]

So, the immediate mystery was solved, but my curiosity was piqued. More Net searches resulted in my finding the *Cryptologia* articles¹ (that they were co-authored by Fran Abeles was no surprise) and the following is a condensation of them.

The field of cryptology goes back into the beginnings of history, and has been used extensively in military operations as far back as the fifth century BC in Sparta, when letter-substitutions (the first having been credited to Julius Cæsar), code-books, and so on, for command and reconnaissance messages were required. Coeval with that was, of course, the science of code-breaking, which entailed more cleverness on the part of the code-makers which entailed

more ingenuity ... etc.

With the advent of the electric telegraph in the 1840s, messages became more vulnerable to interception and code-breaking, and a more effective, more secure coding schema was needed.

The simply alphabetic cipher, or system of letter-substitution, is very easy to "break" — most of today's Sunday newspapers carry a "Cryptogram" — by a bit of ingenuity using letter frequency and patterns. A *polyalphabetic* cipher is one in which *different* cipher letters can serve to represent the *same* text letter. Dodgson's "Alphabet Cipher", published in 1868, is such a code. The coder takes a "key-word" (or phrase), known to both parties, and writes it repeatedly over the message he wishes to encrypt. Here is his example (see the matrix at right) using the key-word *vigilance*:

```
vigilancevigilancevigilancevi  
meetmeontuesdayeveningatseven  
hmkbxebpxpmyllrxiiqtoltfgzzv
```

As Dodgson says, "The receiver of the message can, by the same process, retranslate it into English. *N.B.* If this table be lost, it can easily be written out from memory..."

He believed it to be "his own invention", but in fact it was a re-invention of a version of one invented by Blaise de Vigenère in 1585, and known by his name.² Although this was Dodgson's most well-known work in this subject, he actually invented (or re-invented) three others.

His diary entry for 23 February, 1858 reads "Invented a system of cipher, which I think looks promising, as it may be carried entirely in the head." He proceeded to elaborate a system involving a key-word, with vowels in the key representing message letters, and consonants inserted randomly. Modern analysis revealed it to be a subset of the Vigenère cipher, restricting the substitution alphabets to the ones associated with the five vowels. Dodgson abandoned this "Key-Vowel"³ cipher within three days, believing the next one he thought of to be "far better". But there was much to consider in the "Key-Vowel" method: the introduction of nulls (random letters), the fact that the system could be "carried entirely in the head", the mathematical structure underlying the system, and the algorithmic approach.

Three days after the "Key-Vowel", on 26 February 1858, he recorded "Invented another cypher far better than the last..." This one, the "Matrix Cipher"³ involved writing the alphabet in the form of a matrix (in the Latin alphabet, I and J, U and V are interchangeable)

A	F	L	Q	W
B	G	M	R	X
C	H	N	S	Y
D	I	O	T	Z
E	K	P	V	*

As before, there is a keyword, but this time you count the number of columns and rows one has to travel to get the text letter, and so the encoded message will read in numbers (e.g. 21.23.04.24). The coding is modular (if you go

beyond the last column or line, you start counting again at the first).

Once more, there had been a precursor. Dodgson's cipher was a variant, using nonstandard arithmetic, of a system invented by Sir Francis Beaufort just the year before, which in itself was the inverse of the Vigenère. It was deemed too complicated for use by the Foreign office — Dodgson's later ciphers were simple enough to be used in his letters to his child-friends. The "Matrix" does remain the first cipher system based on mathematical principles, and one which incorporates the encipherment of instructions about the decipherment (the embellishments) within the cipher text itself. The notion of treating instructions as data was also being utilized by Dodgson's acquaintance Charles Babbage in his design of the calculating machine, and it is this principle which is the basis of Von Neumann's "stored program" concept which underlies today's vast data processing industry.

Ten years later, around the time of the "Alphabet" cipher (there is no diary entry), he came up with the "Telegraph" cipher on April 22, 1868. It was also published anonymously (the 1858 ciphers were never published). This time, two sliding alphabets are used. Later analysis again showed it to be equivalent to the Vigenère tableau.

Although Dodgson's ingenuity in inventing these codes produced no truly original contribution to the field, once again we are awed by the creativity and dexterity of his mind in an area in which he was no more than a dilettante.

Drs. Lipson and Abeles have written programs in Pascal (MATRIX and CIPHER_PLAY) to explore these areas. They can be contacted at the Department of Mathematics, Kean University of New Jersey, Morris Ave., Union NJ 07083.

THE ALPHABET-CIPHER

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
B	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a
C	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b
D	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c
E	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d
F	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e
G	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f
H	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
I	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
J	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
K	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
L	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
M	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l
N	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
O	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n
P	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o
Q	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p
R	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q
S	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r
T	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s
U	u	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
V	v	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u
W	w	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v
X	x	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w
Y	y	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x
Z	z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

The beginning of the "message" from *Red Shift*.

P XCDE WAJ. FM KCC
 CYZ GBHP HPIQ KDR
 TQGB CYDT. ELXD UE.
 Q'y LOPFWVG ZQULYQ
 KM MCQI, YLOOCSC U
 ZKVI WB'LT NT QOQ
 ZISR. U'AI WQH BHC
 XTQARF QN WAO IMU,
 AO WAJ'IS RWVD GF
 DK ATS BRYUC XMFSZ-
 WYDSP. P'y GWRPK. XQZ
 YM NASXI. BCQFGTFUCDZ
 OZMAF, NSQ PF'G BOM
 XPQL. U'ZT BC MI
 ZYQKM NCTI QPYS. QF
 WAJ AVZ'H KOKQ X'IS
 SC BO ZMQQOATEW.
 U ALCQ MWU. RTT PTQZT
 OD KDRY TOQR UUAL
 IQ WV MW RPZL.

¹ "Some Victorian Periodic Polyalphabetic Ciphers", Volume XIV No.2, April 1990, pp. 128-134

"The Matrix Cipher of C.L. Dodgson", Volume XIV No.1, January 1990, pp. 28-36

"The Key-Vowel Cipher of Charles L. Dodgson", Volume XV No.1, January 1991, pp. 18-24

These issues may be ordered from UMI (800.521.0600; <http://www.umi.com/infostore>) or *Cryptologia*, Department of Mathematical Sciences, United States Military Academy, West Point, NY 10096-9902. \$12 apiece. <http://www.dean.usma.edu/math/resource/pubs/cryptolo/index.htm>

² The precise degree of variance is discussed in the first article, above.

³ The names "Key Vowel" and "Matrix" are the authors', not Dodgson's.

Report from the Great White North

by Dayna McCausland

The second meeting of the LCSC took place on Sunday, Oct. 26 at the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto. There were 11 members present.

Chris Pezzarello presented a paper called "Framing the Dream Vision in the *Alice* Books". He showed how Carroll worked within — and deviated from — traditional dream vision stories in his *Alice* books, using Chaucer as a comparison. A dream vision story typically has a framing device, in the case of the *Alice* books, the "awake" or reality segments. The dream occupies the middle. Chris examined the frames and Carroll's suspension of time in both the books.

Carroll departed from dream vision tradition by using himself as the "narrator" instead of the dreamer and also having no lessons learned by Alice, except possibly self-reliance (as she was already the most mature person in *Wonderland*, as Adam Gopnik has noted).

In both books the dreams end in a chaotic scene, but in *Looking-Glass Alice* remains confused after waking. Was it her dream or the Red King's? In *Wonderland* the dream is continued with the sister's daydream, which is a miniature version of a *Alice*'s dream vision. Chris feels that one views the dream sequences differently, and in a more enriched way, because of the perspective that the frames provide.

Our second speaker, David Dunn, spoke about Dodgson's Russian tour in the summer of 1867. Entitled "From Russia with Alice", the talk gave us Dodgson's impressions of the country, including a train trip and haggling in Russian with a cab driver.

The journey raises many questions. Why did Dodgson and his traveling companion, Dr. Liddon, return home separately? Why were they traveling together in the first place? They seem to be the original "odd couple". It was the author's only trip outside of England. Why? Why did he choose Russia? It seems to have been a church business trip for Liddon. The trip is intriguing as it must have been influential for Dodgson but little is written about it. David speculated that it was possible that a character (the Cheshire Cat) had its original in a Russian fairy tale.

The present author then put forth "Martha Stewart in *Wonderland*: Decorating your Christmas Tree with a *Wonderland* Theme". With a small tree as a prop she displayed some of the commercially available *Alice* ornaments and showed how common and uncommon household articles could be used for decorations. Starting with the red heart garland you bought on sale after Valentine's Day you can deck your tree with anything mentioned in the *Alice* books such as golden keys, hand lettered (or computer-generated) "Drink Me" labels, thimbles, chess men, playing cards, red and white silk roses, paint brushes, pocket watches made from modeling clay, even cut-outs from *Alice* cards or illustrations. Let your imagination go mad (and that's a good thing).

Quizzical

I. *The Sunday Washington Post* has a book review section and often a quiz which relates to the main article. On August 3rd, the article was on "Zodiac in *Wonderland*" (reviewed here in "From Our Far-Flung Correspondents", p. 22). Here's "Book Bag #932":

Curiouser and curiouser! Answer the following:

1. What writer, in later years a highly regarded American novelist, translated Lewis Carroll's books into Russian?
2. What noted mathematician compiled a book about "Alice in many languages"?
3. Name the author and title of a semi-fantastic mystery in which the hero meets a member of the secret society known as the Vorpall Blades.
4. Identify the famous literary critic who, in a study of the pastoral impulse, suggested that *Alice in Wonderland* could be read as a Freudian text, replete with sexual imagery.
5. What living American composer has written an *Alice* opera?
6. Name the Pulitzer-Prize winning novelist whose short story, "Alice Falling", relates Alice's thoughts and observations as she tumbles down the rabbit-hole.

II. *New York Magazine*, October 6, 1997, had a contest in which the readers were asked "to supply a limerick to conclude with the mangled version of a famous name." A runner-up prize went to Karen Bracey whose entry went:

Hunger forced Alice to look
At the *Wonderland* recipe book
For edible fare.
White Rabbit? March Hare?
Oh, dear, what would Alice dare cook?

Knight Letter readers are invited to submit others. Here's a starter:

A mixed-up old bird once gave birth
To the oddest pair of chicklets on Earth.
Then one of them left
The other bereft:
For what is a robin *sans* duck worth?

III. Carroll, who was a great fan of acrostics, sometimes referred to words and groups of words with only their initial letters. There are six examples in the *Alice* books. Can you name them?

Answers on p. 15

OF BOOKS & THINGS



Oz, Anyone?

Deborah Caputo is interested in forming a Lewis Carroll Society in Australia. She has just published her first newsletter *The Lobster's Voice*. Contact her at 39 Sackville St., Bexley, NSW 2207, Australia.

The Twinkling of the Tea

Taking Tea With Alice by Dawn H. Gottlieb and Diane Sedo
Warner Treasures. 0-446-91173-9. \$17

Reviewed by Stephanie Lovett Stoffel

This is a pretty little book, such as one might give as a gift, proposing six theme tea parties for children, with recipes and games. Only half of the six parties are Alice-related, and neither the recipes nor the games are especially original: the traditional English finger sandwiches are "The White Rabbit's Tea Sandwiches" because some of the fillings are vegetables, which as we all know are the favorite foods of rabbits. There's no rationale at all for the "Lemon-Raspberry Looking-Glass Cake", though it sounds awfully good. One plays "Pin the Tail on the Cheshire Cat" and "Musical Toadstools", and places plastic pink flamingoes near the croquet wickets. A parent who followed all the directions, perhaps combining the best elements from the three parties, and who had all the accessories used by the photo stylist, might indeed manage to stage a charming scene for children neither too young nor too old to appreciate an Alice tea party. Overall, this book does not quite deliver on its promise, relying mainly on the idea of Victorian charm. I could have thought up these parties, and for \$16.95, I would have expected something a little more wonderful.

I have a number of books of this type to compare it with, for despite the theory that my collection of books on tea consists primarily of serious books on the beverage itself, lovely gift books on entertaining with tea will creep in. I declare, it's too bad! The most significant thing for Carroll collectors about *Taking Tea With Alice* (besides the introduction by Edward Wakeling and Anne Clark Amor) is that it is a good example of the very interesting (to me, anyway) intersection of Alice and tea. Many of my books on tea at least mention the most famous tea-party in literature, and the more popular productions uniformly quote Samuel Johnson, the first sentence of *The Portrait of a Lady*, and Lewis Carroll. To many people less obsessed with these two topics, the mention of tea brings to mind the Mad Tea Party, and the mention of Alice conjures up that memorable scene, though too often connected with "A Very Merry Un-Birthday To You!" So, the book at hand may be seen at least as a salute to the entwining of tea and Alice in Western culture.

[Also of interest would be that Mary Jean St. Clair (Alice's only grandchild) contributed Alice's recipe for Orange Marmalade. The non-Alice-related tea parties, according to the promotional material, would then be the "Victorian teas that the real life Alice would have attended."]

Snarkology

The Snark Decoded by Cathy Bown, Angerona Press, 1995
Reviewed by Fernando J. Soto

The latest courageous sailor to join the small number of careful readers and "decoders" of Lewis Carroll's masterpiece *The Hunting of the Snark*, is Cathy Bown in her interesting book *The Snark Decoded*. After reading the book, whose scope spans with varying degrees of depth and success several different traditions (Egyptian, Sumerian, Tibetan, Greek, etc.) and disciplines (Mathematics, History, Languages, etc.), I was left quite "snarked" by the whole voyage.

While glimpses of Bown's Carrollian whimsy, humour, and "spirit" are peppered throughout the text, the main scholarly part (i.e. the decoding) falls quite short of the mark from the very beginning of the book. By emphasizing some extremely shaky anagrams (among which is found "For the answer uos sa majyc ooube" derived from the Snark's famous last line "For the Snark was a Boojum you see"), the author takes much away from her subsequent arguments. As Bown must tell the reader that her own anagrammatic formulation, meant to describe the nature of the poem, must be deciphered as "For the answer was a magic cube", the reader wishing to give her the benefit of an open mind is given a taste of what is to follow — a set of counter-intuitive, disparate and at times chaotic arguments.

Bown believes that the Magic Cube — an odd and interesting mathematical contraption — plays a central role within the "agony", however it is not clear from the book how or why she should think thus. Her "proof" for the relevance of the Magic Cube relies on convincing the reader that the number 42 is common and important to both the poem and the Cube. If this connection was solid then the reader would probably not wonder why the "magical" aspects of the cube at times eclipse the mathematical. This inconsistency is easily seen when Bown states "In reality, of course, a magic cube (lower case letters refer to the literal cube) is composed of 27 smaller cubes; but in making 42 'represent' 27, Carroll is invoking its magical aspect, the fact that 37 of its columns add up to 42".

The other important “decoding” that is offered to the reader is that the Baker is some type of parody of the male consort Osiris of the Egyptian goddess Isis. While this is very interesting, Bown’s reading is much too selective, “stretched”, and incomplete to be convincing. In order to join the Baker to Osiris the reader is expected to agree with Bown’s statement that: “The pronunciation of ‘baker’ (‘baka’) is a piece of wordplay — the key to the Baker’s central importance to the poem. The name resides in the annals of ancient Egyptian history.” This information on ‘baka’ is stated to have come from the Book of the Dead first published (in English?), according to Bown’s bibliography, in 1895 — some 19 years after the *Snark*! While it is possible that Carroll may have had access to another source (say R. Lepsius’ *Das Todtenbuch* of 1842), the case is never made to prove this accessibility. Thus, by concentrating on only two of the many hasty and perhaps anachronistic arguments found within the book, a reader may find him/herself a bit sea sick on this particular voyage, to say nothing of all the swaying motion of the many shifting or unsupported claims in the book. Some of these (e.g. that the Bellman “could well be a portrait of Henry Liddell” or a Father time figure; that the Boots could represent Apis the Bull “based” on the Greek for ‘ox’, βοῦς “boos”; that by “hail” and “fire” Carroll surely meant ‘hell-fire’; that the Beaver may be Alice Liddell; that the Maker of Bonnets and Hoods must be the Mad Hatter; etc.).

Stylistically the book also “feels” rushed and soon becomes extremely hard to follow while the explanations become weaker, shorter, and fewer in number as it progresses. Another shortcoming of the book is that nearly half of the text is devoted to a somewhat more successful “decoding” of Fits which Bown, not Carroll, wrote! This may have been an “acceptable” methodology had the decoding for Carroll’s *The Hunting of the Snark* been much stronger; however, as the first leg of the task was lame, the latter, more wooden leg (i.e. decoding one’s own work) fails to provide the locomotion needed if the main decoding thesis is to go forward. Also, partly due to the book’s style, this reader is left with the question: should a decoding of a text clarify or obscure, help guide or trip the readers up?

To sum up with my fingers and thumbs, this book, while being interesting, falls quite short of what it claims to be — a decoding of Carroll’s *Snark*. The writer appears, at some level, to intuit this, as even as late as page 88, the second last page of the “decoding” of Carroll’s poem, she still pushes her weak anagram and her unlikely interpretations:

The last line of Carroll’s poem contains of course, the anagram “For the answer uos sa majyk ooube” (For the answer was a magic cube), and is, I believe, Carroll’s way of conveying the message “the baker underwent a magical death” / “the Baker entered the immortal afterlife”.

So, even if the reader agrees with this last sentiment — the Baker’s immortality, mythological, literary or otherwise — one would, I believe, be hard pressed to agree with Bown’s explanations outlining the cause for his deifica-

tion. Ultimately there are just too many Carrollian knots left untied for the theory to sail in the direction Bown wishes to go: the fact that too many of her stories don’t fit Carroll’s Fits serves to fog up the reader’s vision; there are too many waves of imagination and not enough solid argumentation based on chronologically sound sources to anchor the new “decoding”; and finally, there is too much reliance on the shifting nature of her anagrammatic ballast — particularly the types of anagram that needs not only several interpretations but two or three levels of decoding before yielding their diminishing, unstable returns. Nevertheless, after historically surveying past “decodings” of the *Snark*, this work does not appear much worse than the most celebrated, and not much better than those held in contempt.

[See “Far-Flung” p. 21 for more details]



Lingering onward dreamily...

From its opening montage of drawings and photographs, the reader of Stephanie Lovett Stoffel’s marvelously imagined *Lewis Carroll in Wonderland* is inexorably drawn into the “Life and Times of Alice and Her Creator”, as the subtitle proclaims. Initially somewhat skeptical (“not another Carroll biography!”), I was immediately and deliciously seduced by its panoply of colorful images and smooth, accurate and, dare I say, loving prose.

This work was conceived of as part of the “Découvertes” (“Discoveries”) series from Editions Gallimard Jeunesse, and co-published by Harry N. Abrams in the U.S. (and, as *Lewis Carroll and Alice*, in the U.K. by Thames and Hudson under the “New Horizons” imprint — both French and Japanese editions are also in the works). “Discoveries” consist of about 300 titles in French and 50 in English which are of uniform appearance and intended to cover a topic for the benefit of the educated general reader who wants to further his interest in a subject (e.g. *The Story of Jazz: Bop and Beyond*; *Writing: The Story of Alphabets and Scripts*, etc.).

The author covers not only the requisite subject matter, but puts all aspects of the tale in their proper historical and cultural context. The superabundant and suitably captioned imagery — from the familiar, through the rarely seen in Carroll biographies (e.g. Sargent’s *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose*; Kate Greenaway’s rendering of Humpty Dumpty as a young lad) to the rarely seen, period (e.g. early drawings for Disney’s *AW* in a completely different style; J.M. Cameron’s photographic studies of nude children) — adds tremendous visual excitement.

There is no aspect of his life — from friendships, hobbies, and interests through religion, career, and books — which are left without proper context. A further treasure-trove awaits the reader at the back, where there are selections and excerpts from Carroll's poetry, prose, letters, and essays.

Scholar, collector, LCSNA board member Stephanie Stoffel has fashioned an elegant, eminently readable, and gorgeously browsable work. However, I cannot in good conscience recommend buying a single copy. Rather, I insist on your purchasing several. 'Tis the season, after all.

ISBN 0-8109-2838-8. \$13 at your local bookstore, or from the publisher at 100 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 1001; 212.206.7715; <http://www.abramsbooks.com>.

Take care of the sounds...

There is something unsatisfactory to me about dramatizations of the *Alice* books. My personal fantasy is upset by colliding with the actualization of somebody else's fantasy. Pictures (as in illustrations) don't bother me — in fact I rather enjoy comparing the concepts of different artists; but I find it unsettling when the characters develop a life of their own as they inevitably must in motion pictures or theater. So it was a pleasant surprise to attend a radio production of *Alice* by the California Artists Repertory Theater (see *KL* 55), a company which brightens Los Angeles radio on Sunday nights. They are also to be found on an irregular schedule in a great variety of one-man shows and play readings at other venues around town; and one of these, on Saturday afternoon, June 14th, was the Hollywood Roosevelt Cinegrill, a civilized setting for a radio production, where CART performed *AIW*. Peggy Webber, the Executive Director, adapted the script and is an old pro — I use the word only to describe her vast experience as actress, director, and producer because there is nothing about this sprightly lady that suggests age. She works with a suitable group of equally experienced professionals who seem to have great fun putting on these performances when they are not otherwise engaged. In 1994, a slightly different cast read and recorded the same adaptation. At that time, Alice was played by Samantha Eggar, this time by Anne Rogers. A cassette of the earlier performance is available before Christmas (hint: what a great present! Why not order both?) Ms. Webber's neat adaptation of necessity defers to radio's time constraints, but it still manages to include bits of *TTLG* and the charm of the production is enhanced by a piano score written and performed by David Pinto.

It was a marvel to me to see these mature actors,

some of them even stout and creaky, standing before microphones, without costume or props, utterly convincing as the creatures of Wonderland. Anne Rogers has just the right kind of light voice for Alice (think Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, one of her starring roles in London), William Windom makes a properly capricious Cheshire Cat, Marvin Kaplan is fine as a fussy White Rabbit, and...no, I can't enumerate all of the splendid cast; but I enjoyed them so much that when they repeated their performance that evening across the street at the Hollywood Entertainment Museum, I trailed along after them to hear them once more.

Cassettes may be ordered from CART, 6612 Whitley Terrace, Los Angeles CA 90068. US: \$15, Europe: \$18, elsewhere: \$20 (postage included).

Conference & Call for Papers I

Review by Hilda Bohem



EVE WAS INTRIGUED, BUT EVENTUALLY DECIDED TO MOVE ON TO ANOTHER TREE.

"Eyebeam" by Sam Hurt

"The Lewis Carroll Phenomenon", a centenary conference at the University of Wales is being planned for April 1st - 5th, 1998. "For the centenary of Dodgson's death a conference will be held in Cardiff on the place of Lewis Carroll in cultural and intellectual history. The use and development of Carrollian themes, ideas and techniques in science, mathematics and philosophy, as well as in literature and the other arts, will be discussed in an interdisciplinary context. The provisional programme includes contributions from: Professor Gillian Beer, Professor Morton Cohen, Colin Ford, Professor Peter Hunt, Professor James Kincaid, Professor Robin Lakoff, Professor Jean-

Jacques Lecercle, and Alan Garner. There will be a number of sectional programmes, in response to the proposals for papers which we receive. The following are already taking shape: Children's Literature, organised by Professor Peter Hunt; and a Pragmatics workshop, with Professor Robin Lakoff. Conference delegates will also have the opportunity to attend events in the Welsh 'Through the Looking-Glass, Centenary Festival' which runs March - August of 1998, celebrating Carroll through contemporary dance, literature, visual arts, film music and theatre."

Other events include: the National Museum of Wales' exhibition of photographs by C.L. Dodgson; and a presentation of Derek Bourgeois's "Jabberwocky" with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the BBC Chorus and a choir of schoolchildren drawn from all over Wales on Tuesday, April 7th. For information on papers, contact Dean Burnett, University of Wales, Cardiff, PO Box 920, Cardiff, CF1 3XP, UK; Burnett@cardiff.ac.uk; carroll-conference@cardiff.ac.uk; 44 1222 874000 phone, 44 1222 371921 fax; <http://www.cf.ac.uk/uwcc/secap/carfest/carroll.html>.

Conference & Call for Papers II

The C. S. Lewis Centenary Conference, together with the annual conference of the Mythopoeic Society "Mythcon XXIX", to be held July 15-20, 1998, in Wheaton, Illinois, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of C. S. Lewis. Proposals are invited for papers on Lewis, his fellow Inklings, and "fantasy literature, in particular on Charles Lutwidge Dodgson ('Lewis Carroll'), who died the same year that C. S. Lewis and Owen Barfield were born." There will be a day of special programming (Thursday, July 16) on Lewis Carroll in recognition of his centenary as well."

Abstracts (300 to 500 words) may be submitted no later than March 1, 1998, to the Papers Coordinator, Charles A. Huttar, English Department, Hope College, Holland, MI 49422-9000, fax 616.395.7134. Inquiries: 616.395.7617 or 396.2260; huttar@hope.cit.hope.edu.

The Society's monthly journal *Mythprint* (Eleanor Farrell, ed. - emfarrell@earthlink.net), which is dedicated to the above topics, will be pleased to consider papers presented at the conference for publication. There is also a quarterly journal, *Mythlore*.

Because of the special nature of the Carroll programming, the conference will provide single-day memberships (advance rate \$35 for one day, until 31 December), and a partial room/board package will also be available. For general information, registration, or to be put on the mailing list for the Conference, write: C. S. Lewis Centenary Conference, c/o Lynn Maudlin, P.O. Box 394, Altadena, CA 91003-0394; maudlinlynn@earthlink.net. <http://home.earthlink.net/~emfarrell/mythsoc/mythcon29.html>

Conference III

The Dickens Project at the gorgeous University of California, Santa Cruz, "a consortium of research groups on campuses across the country and overseas devoted to the study of Charles Dickens and nineteenth-century culture, holds a conference each summer that focuses on a Dickens novel, although in two recent years we have combined Dickens with another great Victorian novelist. This summer we intend to combine Dickens's *Oliver Twist* with Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, and we anticipate attendance will exceed the 250 participants who came last year. The week-long conference is a marvelous hybrid of scholars, graduate students, Elder Hostellers, and members of the general public. Besides the workshops and lectures, we have Victorian Teas, dancing, refreshments each evening, films, and special entertainment. This summer we will also have croquet, of course." August 2nd - 8th. \$175 for the conference, \$600 for on-campus housing and meals. Contact JoAnna Rottke at 408.459.2103 or the U.C. Dickens Project, 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz CA 95064. dpj@cats.ucsc.edu; <http://humwww.ucsc.edu/dickens/index.html>.

The "Cover" Story

"It began with blotting-paper," the Knight answered with a groan.

TTLG, chapter VIII

There has been a long and, in most cases, unfortunate association between the *Alice* books and the drug culture of the Sixties. From the Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" to Thomas Fensch's *Alice in Acidland* and beyond, those persons blessed with little imagination have found it difficult to conceive of the genius of Lewis Carroll not being inflamed by pharmacological substances. When the Lewis Carroll Discussion Board was active on the Web, it seemed to be the most common query, even though the answer, "What part of 'NO' don't you understand?" was so blazingly clear.

One of the more interesting artifacts of that era is the use of highly decorated printed sheets of "blotter paper acid", i.e. absorbent paper infused with the hallucinogen LSD and perforated so that one can access the individual doses (900 in the present example gracing our front and back covers). A marvelous collection of some 200 of these sheets is housed in the "Institute of Illegal Images" run by Mark McCloud in San Francisco, who has been collecting them for twenty years. The drugs on the paper have long ago lost all their potency due to exposure, but the illustrations remain as curious remnants of that historic culture.



From *TTLG*, illustrated by Ralph Steadman

Poetry Corner

As noted by Martin Gardner ("Leaves from the Deanery Garden", p. 19), Canadian writer Vincent Starrett's poems, *Brillig Sonnets*, was published by The Dierkes Press in 1949. The LCS of Canada recently published this poem and his 1919 short story "The Escape of Alice" as a keepsake for their first meeting (KL 55). However, everyone save Sandor Burstein has overlooked the fact that there were two Alice poems in *Brillig Sonnets*. The second one, "State of the Union" was reprinted in the LCSC's *White Rabbit Tales* #6.

Alice, Where Art Thou?

Quaint child, old-fashioned Alice, lend your dream:
I would be done with modern story-spinners,
Follow with you the laughter and the gleam:
Weary am I, this night, of saints and sinners.
We have been friends since Lewis and old Tenniel
Housed you immortally in red and gold.
Come! Your naiveté is a spring perennial:
Let me be young again before I'm old.
You are a glass of youth: this night I choose
Deep in your magic labyrinths to stray,
Where rants the Red Queen in her splendid hues
And the White Rabbit hurries on his way.
Let us once more adventure, hand in hand:
Give me belief again — in Wonderland!

Starrett's Alice keepsake, 1-55246-032-0, may be ordered from *The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box*™, P.O. Box 122, Sauk City WI 53583; 608.5080 fax.

In Memoriam

Adolph William Mall, husband of Barbara S. Mall, died shortly before Thanksgiving. For many years they attended LCSNA meetings, even venturing as far as Los Angeles for our last meeting at the Huntington Library. Trained in physics and mathematics, he had a lifelong interest in the theater, starring in many amateur productions and, more recently, was a featured actor in David Mamet's *Homicide*. Donations may be sent to: Hospice of Howard County, 5537 Twin Knolls Road Suite 433, Columbia, MD 21045 or Lithuania Orphans Care, 2711 West 71st Street, Chicago, IL 6062.

Actor, director, and producer **Burgess Meredith** (1907 - September 9th) made his professional debut with Eva Le Gallienne's 1933 production of *AW*, playing the duck, the dormouse and Tweedledec.

We have been
friends since Lewis
and old Tenniel
Housed you
immortally in red
and gold.

Answers to Quiz

1. Vladimir Nabokov, 1923.
2. Warren Weaver. Actually, *Alice in Many Tongues*, 1964.
3. Frederic Brown, *Night of the Jabberwock*, 1984.
4. William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral*, 1960.
5. David delTredici, who won a Pulitzer for his many symphonic works based on the Alice books.
6. Steven Millhauser, who won the Pulitzer in '97 and the National Book Award in '96 for *Martin Dressler: The Tale of an American Dreamer* published this story in *Antaeus* magazine in 1990.

II. (Alistair Cooke; Robinson Duckworth): KL readers? Any contributions?

III.

1. "...why it is you hate — C and D..." *AW*, ch. 3
2. "...everything that begins with an M..." *AW*, ch. 7
3. "...Of course twinkling begins with a T!" *AW*, ch. 11
4. "...I know it begins with L!" *TTLG*, ch. 3
5. "...I love my love with an H..." *TTLG*, ch. 7

Leaves from the Deanery Garden

First things first: “How d’ye do” -

Now! I’m a member of the Societies here & in England & have just sent in my form for the Centenary Programme in Oxford — and before I book my flight I was hoping to hook(ah) up with some other members from the Bay Area and make a (tea) party of it! (plus, group bookings for first & last nights in London, the train to Oxford, etc.)

Do you know of anyone getting together such a group I might join?

Molly Martin
636 Savoy Court
Walnut Creek CA 94598
510.934.6864



KL readers in any geographical area wishing to form such a group are welcome to write in.

I was interested to read about the “Red Queen principle” in *KL* #55. I first came across it in *The Lost World* by Michael Crichton. He explains it quite nicely in “layman” terms. The villain in that book is named Lewis Dodgson, I believe. I wanted to write and ask him about that, but never got around to it.

A well done issue. I would appreciate hearing any feedback on the cards illustration. I still don’t think that the marks are noses.

Thanks for the Canadian content. It was a very nice appreciation of Joe Brabant and I’ll do a better job reporting the next meeting. Do you want news of what’s happening in the great white north (and I don’t mean Alaska)?

Dayna McCausland
Erin, ON, Canada
sheerluck@sympatico.ca



Yes, we do. Dayna’s report appears on p. 10.

It was I (not Fran) was the one who quoted the Web about Carroll being the “Martin Gardner of his time”. By the way — great newsletter. We need more members like this William Schaefer. And seeing the question [on the “deck of cards” illustration] in *KL* #55 jogged my memory: B. Rollitz re-engraved the Tenniel plates for the Limited Editions Club publication in 1932. These were also used in the numerous Heritage Press reprints.

Joel



Thanks, Joel. And William — I hope I didn’t offend you terribly with my pro-technology stance, and I know our readers would very much welcome further correspondence from you.

Best issue yet. Whole meeting (and play I missed) you captured well. The Borges piece was well worth publishing (I must find out more about this Baltassar Gracian — one of the many 17th century Jesuits about whom I know nothing).

The piece on Joe Brabant was nicely done as well.

Just a word about the type: the *KL* seems to have been printed on a more absorbent paper for a number of letters, especially in the larger point size, are beginning to implode.

And finally a small quibble: on page 2, column 2, line 23, word 7: “apparati” — if you want to use a Latin plural, this one would be “apparatus” because it is a 4th declension noun rather than a 2nd declension one.

August Imholtz
Beltsville MD



I hope the printing problems will be cleared up in this issue, as we are improving our various apparatus.

Undoubtedly noticed before, but new to me: the book of Job is the only book in the Bible (KJV) with exactly 42 chapters.

Earl Abbe
McLean VA



In the next newsletter, you might wish to note the existence of a software package, which I obtained at no charge at a booth at SIGGRAPH, called “Alice” — authoring software for 3d graphics in Win 95/NT, developed by the User Interface Group at CMU. Both the booklet cover and the enclosed

CD-ROM have color Tenniel illustrations.

The booklet says this software was developed with DARPA money, which may be the first time the DoD has promoted Alice, even if indirectly. Seems very unVictorian...not sure Carroll, or your friend William Schaefer, would approve. Actually, though, it’s not the first time DoD has promoted a Victorian female — the DoD-sponsored programming language “Ada” was named after Ada Lovelace, a friend of Charles Babbage and the first person to program a (very primitive) computer. So maybe Carroll would approve after all.

Jonathan Handel
x@worldnet.att.net



SIGGRAPH: Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics.
DARPA: Department of Defense (DoD) Advanced Research
Projects Agency
CMU: Carnegie Mellon University

Their website, which allows for the free downloading of this package, is at <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~alice> and begins with the quote: "A display connected to a digital computer gives us a chance to gain familiarity with concepts not realizable in the physical world. It is a looking glass into a mathematical wonderland." - Ivan Sutherland, father of interactive computer graphics."

I've just finished building a few web sites that might be of interest to your readers: point your browser at <http://www-personal.usyd.edu.au/~mwsmith/boojum!.html> (the "Boojum!" home page), and see what you get. Follow the links to "Mrs. Hargreaves Remembers" and so on.

If you think your readers would find these interesting and/or informative, I would be grateful if you were to mention them in your newsletter. Many thanks!

Martin Wesley-Smith
Sydney, Australia
mwsmith@mail.usyd.edu.au



Wesley-Smith's excellent "Boojum" is a full-length work of "choral nonsense theatre" available on double CD. "Mrs. Hargreaves Remembers" is a piece for soprano and instrumental ensemble.

I have a more economical solution to the "Jacob's Ladder" puzzle from KL 55: sword, sward, shard, share. But I'm no biblical scholar, and don't have a concordance to same, so I can't say that either "sword" or "shard" is in any English version of the Bible.

I enthusiastically second what you wrote in reply to William Schaefer's letter bemoaning "electronic writing". I tell all my correspondents that they will get a reply much sooner if they communicate with me via e-mail (rather than on paper). And this is not just because the message arrives in a matter of seconds (well, sometimes hours) rather than days: the medium is simply a great deal more conducive to swift reaction.

As for comparing the Web and e-mail to television, the idea had never occurred to me. I find they have extremely little in common, apart from the fact that all three involve the use of a TV-type screen. But television remains essentially a passive experience, whereas exploring the Web and creating e-mail are intensely active pursuits.

On the other hand, your statement that mail was delivered five times a day in Dodgson's England does suggest that not all change has been for the best over the past hundred years.

I greatly enjoy reading the *Knight Letter*. Keep up the good work!

Carleton W. Carroll (not a pseudonym)
Corvallis and Yachats, Oregon
76161.1477@compuserve.com



Thank you, Carleton. Unfortunately, neither word is in the KJV. And what am I to do with the comment that you "don't have a concordance to same" in a letter defending the Web? It's full of them! A particularly good one is at <http://bible.gospelcom.net/bible?>.

After many attempts and failures, I am proud to announce the up and running George Walker web site. I have a web page with a picture of the Alice book I illustrated as well as my CV and other stuff. My web site is located at <http://www3.sympatico.ca/george.walker>.

George Walker
Toronto



George is the illustrator of several fine Alice books, detailed in KL 55.

I can tell you now that the Borges [translation in KL 55] looks almost as Borges, and that you have accomplished a good work. Thanks! About Stilman, he looks a little pedantic, but you know him better than I: I suppose he's a little pedantic! I have read also Mac Adam's paper. Of course, I discover with pleasure this relation between Borges and Carroll. But the thesis itself is, in my opinion, excessively elaborate. What he says about Borges is far more intelligent (perhaps because it is far more informative) than what he says about Carroll.

But I'm suffering a sad sickness: I am finding literacy and criticism unnecessary, because I'm reading my own notes! Against this argument, you cannot tell anything.

As ever, I'm progressing in my elaboration of the worst English in the world, and remain,

Your friend,

Eduardo Stilman
stilman@overnet.com.ar



Sr. Stilman, whose translation of the Alice books into Spanish was graced with an introduction by his friend Jorge Luis Borges, is referring to the chapter "Lewis Carroll and Jorge Luis Borges: Mock Epic as Autobiography" in *Textual Confrontations: Comparative Readings in Latin American Literature* by Alfred Mac Adam, University of Chicago, 1987.

I'd like to add my congratulations to you for the work you are doing to maintain and stimulate interest in the work of Lewis Carroll [this was addressed to the Webmaster of our site (Joel)]. I really have enjoyed both the information and the perceptions.

I am a freelance actor / producer / director living and working in London. One of my recent projects was to record a performance of "Alice's Adventures In Wonderland" given by the eminent English actor Sir Donald Sinden. This has now been completed with an original and sympathetic score of music and sound effects. I expect it to be released as a double CD within the next six months. However, the mood of the record-

ing is so evocative that I believe it could be adapted to make a soundtrack for a computer generated production or sequence. This type of creative activity is nightmarishly expensive to experiment with and so I don't think it would be 'commercial' at this stage.

However I wondered if any of you readers are interested in exploring this or other ideas to further exploit my recording. All suggestions carefully considered.

Charles Baillie, CBE
57 Queen's Gate Mews
London SW7 England
Tel 0171 589 7100
cbaillie@dircon.co.uk



Dear Mark,

I'm sure you did not intend to cause a problem, but the inaccuracies in your writeup of my talk [in KL 55] are serious.

First, in the first paragraph of the right column of what should be page 3 (unnumbered), your comment that there is an infinite number of such triangles is incorrect! And the suggested doubling of the two that Dodgson found, as well as the {15, 112, 113} you offer will NOT have an area of 210 — which is the essential ingredient in this problem. Dodgson couldn't find the third triangle because this is a really difficult problem!

Secondly, your writeup suggests that I said what actually is *your* commentary: like the "apparent hocus-pocus" in the next paragraph; the "obsessions" you refer to in the third paragraph — which I don't believe they were, etc.

You might also consider numbering pages in future issues.

Please retract the *entire* writeup giving the reasons I have outlined above.

Sincerely,

Fran [Abeles]



Dear Fran,

Thank you for writing, and I really do hope we can clear this up.

Firstly, any article written in the first person is bound to be seen as reflected through that person's perceptions, prejudices, strengths, failings, vocabulary, and attitude. That's a journalistic "given".

Secondly, we must distinguish between an informal write-up which attempts to give the flavor of a meeting to those who were not fortunate enough to be there and a formal academic presentation.

For example, the "apparent hocus-pocus" is certainly how the machinations of the date calculations appear to the lay audience. Trained mathematicians such as you and I will see it differently, but I am trying to write from the "everyman's" point of view.

Thirdly, remarks in parenthesis are the known provenance of the writer, or editor, hence the "Dodgson, the lonely bachelor etc." insertion will be perceived as my comments, not yours. I assume our audience is intelligent enough to make these distinctions.

Now, on to the basic disagreement. The primary subject of the speech was Martin Gardener, and it was to his writings that I turned for confirmation when I was researching and writing. I quote directly from his article: "Actually there is no limit to the number of right triangles that can be found with integral sides and equal areas... Carroll came very close to finding three such triangles... Had Carroll doubled the size of the two triangles that he found, he would have obtained the first two triangles cited above, from which the step to the third would have been easy."

There, you see, is the source for my remark about infinitely many such triplets and that it would have been "easy" for Carroll to have found. I do also acknowledge that I could have been a lot more clear in my explanation.

Now, of course I realize that we are looking at two different problems: the one proposed by Carroll and discussed by Gardener which involves the finding of three integral-sided equal area triangles (whose simplest solution I mentioned in the article and, again, involved the doubling of the ones he had already found); and the much more difficult one of discovering the third rational-sided triangle whose area matched that of the two he had discovered. The solution you presented to that second problem was ingenious, but may I inquire: was your source Gardener? Dudeney? Your own researches? Yes, this is a much more complicated problem, but was it really the one at hand?

I can't imagine what you mean by retracting the *entire* write-up. I'm very happy to publish, in your words or mine, the tale of the possible misinterpretations or misrepresentations. You are welcome to submit a letter or an article, or I can write up the substance of our correspondence and acknowledge what is mine and what is yours, and how the confusion occurred (and this time, I promise to run it by you before it is printed!).

Sincerely,

Mark



Dear Mark,

The solution to Dodgson's problem of finding the third rational-sided right triangle having the same area was given by the Scottish mathematician, C. Tweedie in 1905. Gardner dealt with the simpler subproblem of integer-sided right triangles having the same area, relying on Dudeney's work for the solutions and comments in his *Scientific American* article. In 1996, N. Hungerbühler proved what Dudeney intuitively thought was true, i.e. there exists an infinite family of triples of integer-sided right triangles having the same area.

Regards to your father,

Fran

Hi Fran -

Thank you very much for your note. Unfortunately, I don't remember the numbers of the solution you presented to the "210" problem, though I recall it was a very acute angle. Could you send me the numerical solution, please?

Much regards,

Mark



Dear Mark,

The solution is $\{41 / 58, 24360 / 41, 1412881 / 2378\}$.

Hi Fran -

Thank you again for the solution. Could you clear up a bit of confusion on my part? I do understand that the solution you sent does fulfill the conditions of Carroll's problem, i.e. to find a third "rational-sided right-angled triangle" which has an area of 210, as did his other triangles; my question is: why did Martin Gardner in that article, refer to and solve the related question of finding "right triangles with integral sides and equal areas." This, to me, is a very different question.

I hope to clear it all up for the readers in KL 56. Do you have any input on this issue?

Appreciatively,

Mark



Dear Mark,

Your question is, of course, the right one to ask. I honestly don't know the answer.

With best wishes,

Fran



Readers (if we haven't lost all of you) should know how deeply I respect Dodgson's mathematical oeuvre and his mental calculating abilities, as well as the minds and works of Fran Abeles and Martin Gardner. If there was any misperception on this, I sincerely apologize. And I hereby inaugurate page-numbering for this and future issues, as a salute to Professor Abeles.

Thanks again for all the kind words about me in the latest *Knight Letter*. It's a great issue, rich in new insights and possible notes if I ever get a chance to do a *Still More Annotated Alice*!

I recently picked up a copy of Vincent Starrett's book of poems titled *Brillig* (Chicago: The Dierkes Press, 1949). I found in it the enclosed charming poem about Alice. Starrett, as I'm sure you know, was a Chicago critic and poet, author of many books including one on Sherlock Holmes. He wrote a weekly column in the Chicago Tribune. His Alice poem probably appeared earlier in some periodical.

The *Knight Letter* is slowly turning into a periodical of more interest, or surely as much interest, as *Jabberwocky*.

I have just finished writing a new Oz book, currently being considered by St. Martin's Press. (My wife predicts a rejection). I mention it because I have placed Wonderland in Oz, and several chapters are devoted to Dorothy, Scarecrow, and Tin Woodman, taking a tour through Wonderland where they discover numerous errors in Alice's two out-of-body visits there.

All best,

Martin Gardner
Hendersonville NC



It is an honor indeed to receive this letter. I have taken the liberty of printing the poem he referred to on p. 15. And let us hope his wife is wrong!

You may want to put in the *Knight Letter* that Martin Gardner has been elected to the Literature Section of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

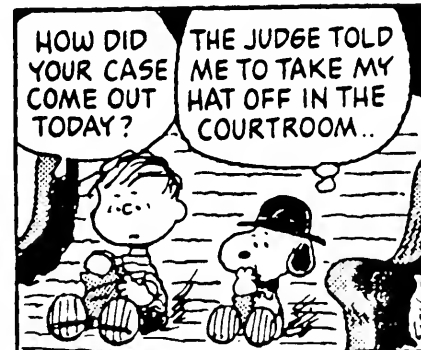
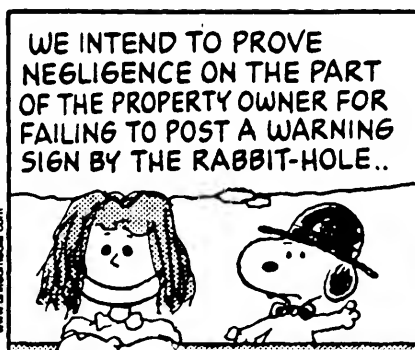
With best wishes,

Fran

So done.



PEANUTS Charles Schulz



The earliest and most horrific image of my childhood, as deeply embedded in my consciousness as any "real" event (and I lived on a small farm, where the slaughtering of chickens must have been frequent) sprang at me out of a seemingly benign children's book, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures Through the Looking-Glass* [sic]. In the concluding chapter of this generally disturbing book Alice is being crowned Queen at a banquet that begins with promise then rapidly degenerates into anarchy:

"Take care of yourself!" screamed the White Queen, seizing Alice's hair with both hands. "Something's going to happen!"

And then . . . all sorts of things happened in a moment. The candles all grew up to the ceiling . . . As to the bottles, they each took a pair of plates, which they hastily fitted on as wings, and so, with forks for legs, went fluttering about in all directions . . .

At this moment she heard a hoarse laugh at her side, and turned to see what was the matter with the White Queen, but, instead of the Queen, there was the leg of mutton sitting in the chair. "Here I am!" cried a voice from the soup tureen, and Alice turned again, just in time to see the Queen's broad, good-natured face grinning at her for a moment over the edge of the tureen, before she disappeared into the soup.

There was not a moment to be lost. Already several of the guests were lying down in the dishes, and the soup ladle was walking up toward Alice's chair . . .

Alice escapes the nightmare prospect of being eaten by waking from her dream as, in her Wonderland adventure, she woke from that dream. But what solace, if the memory retains the unspeakable, and the unspeakable can't be reduced to a dream?

Joyce Carol Oates, "Reflections on the Grotesque"
Originally published in *Haunted: Tales of the Grotesque*

No work of art so thrills us, or possesses the power to enter our souls deeply and perhaps even irreversibly, as the "first" of its kind. The luminous books of our childhood will remain the luminous books of our lives.

For me, it was Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, a Christmas gift from my grandmother when I was 8 years old. First of all, I was enchanted by the book as a physical object, for there were few books in our rural household: both Alice tales were published in a single, wonderful volume (Grosset & Dunlap, 1946) with reproductions of the famous illustrations by John Tenniel, almost as fascinating to me as the tales themselves. There was a dreamlike cover showing Alice amid the comical-grotesque Carroll creations that, to an adult eye, bear a disturbing kinship with the comical-grotesque creations of Hieronymus Bosch, and this cover, too, was endlessly fascinating. In my memory, this first important book of my life was quite large, about the size of what we call today a coffee-table book, and heavy; but when I investigate — for of course I still have the book in my 19th-century British bookcase, along with *The Hunting of the Snark*, Lewis Carroll's *Bed-*

side Book, and other Carroll titles — I discover to my surprise that it measures only 6½ by 9 inches! A quite ordinary-sized book after all.

What is the perennial appeal of the *Alice* books? If you could transpose yourself into a girl of 8, in 1946, in a farming community in upstate New York north of Buffalo, imagine the excitement of opening so beautiful a book to read a story in which a girl of about your age is the heroine; imagine the excitement of being taken along with Alice, who talks to herself continually, just like you, whose signature phrase is "Curiouser and curiouser", on her fantastic yet somehow plausible adventure down the rabbit hole, and into the Wonderland world. It would not have occurred to me even to suspect that the "children's tale" was in brilliant ways coded to be read by adults and was in fact an English classic, a universally acclaimed intellectual *tour de force* and what might be described as a psychological / anthropological dissection of Victorian England. It seems not to have occurred to me that the child-Alice of drawing rooms, servants, tea and crumpets and chess, was of a distinctly different background than my own. I must have been the ideal reader: credulous, unjudging, eager, thrilled. I knew only that I believed in Alice, absolutely.

The influence of the *Alice* books on my inner life is surely incalculable. I'd more or less memorized them as a child from repeated readings. (I've subsequently written on the subject, and have several times taught "Alice" in university courses.) At any time, in any place, appropriate or otherwise, including even listening as I'm being introduced to give readings or lectures, and often in social or professional gatherings, the Alice-voice rises to consciousness and I hear "Curiouser and curiouser" — "Who cares for you? You're nothing but a pack of cards!" — "'Twas brillig and the slithy toves / Did gyre and gimble in the wabe; / All mimsy were the borogoves, / And the mome raths outgrabe" — "Take care of yourself! Something's going to happen!" Impossible to know if a fictitious character has provided me with a "voice", or whether my natural voice was nearly identical with Alice's.

To descend down a rabbit hole, to push through a mirror in a drawing room, to enter that "other world" of the imagination — this is Alice's destiny, as it might be said to be our collective destiny, if only we value it and cultivate it. For the artist of any kind, the experience is life itself. What is most wonderful about the "Alice" tales, for a child reader at least, is that though they contain nightmare material, and are, intermittently, really quite frightening, Alice triumphs in the end; she retains a fundamental reason, fair-mindedness and sense of justice, as well as a necessary sense of humor, and at the end of both adventures she "wakes" to her real life about which we know nothing other than that she has a sister and there are several kittens in the household. Not for Alice, our Alice, the fate of children in the crueler of the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm, for Alice is the self's very obduracy, forever innocent, and blessed.

Joyce Carol Oates, "Personal Best"
Originally published in *Salon Magazine*
<http://www.salonmagazine.com>

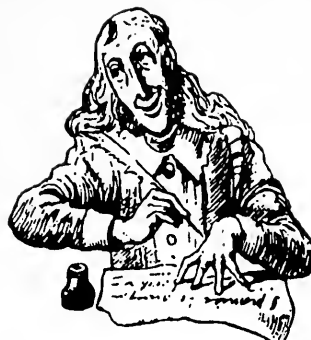
From Our Far-flung

Books

Liisa, Liisa ja Alice. Matkakirja. (In Finnish) Riitta Oittinen. Tampere University Press, Tampere. 1997. 162 pp. Illustrated. 951-44-4216-4. This book "discusses the three complete Finnish translations of *AW*. They were all made in different kinds of cultural situations: 1906, nationalist Finland; 1972, Finland of 'die neue Sachlichkeit'; 1995, splintered Finland." The book also holds Ms. Oittinen's own illustrations, including eight color plates. taju@uta.fi; <http://www.uta.fi/~trioi/liisa.htm>.

Kirjeitä lapsiystävälle ja muita kirjoituksia. Translated by Markus Lång into Finnish. Helsinki, Loki-Kirjat. An anthology of Carroll's lesser-known works, including letters to child friends, "Feeding the Mind", the Russian Journal, and many others. \$21. 952-9646-24-0. The edition will be limited to 1,000.

Cathy Bower, who lives on the Isle of Wight and is the author of *A Looking-Glass Sequel* (1993), and *The Raven and the Riddle* (1994) has added two new works to her oeuvre. *The Snark Decoded* promises to be an "in-depth analysis [in which] all previous theories have been completely overturned. Far from being an innocent and meaningless children's poem, as the author claimed, it is a savage parody and a complexly encoded web of intrigue... The text is actually heavily encrypted around the central theme of the magic cube." It promises: the answer to "Life, the Universe and Everything", to The Riddle; and to reveal "a verbal attack on the Poet Laureate himself, Tennyson, as well as a particularly vitriolic broadside against Henry Liddell." *The Hunting of the Snark Concluded* "follows the fortunes of the crew after the disappearance of the Baker". Brian Puttock, "using a genre of book illustrations popular in Carroll's day", has created "a set of 38 superb new grotesques". Circa £10 each from Angerona Press, 19 Star



Street, Ryde, I.o.W. PO33 2HX, U.K.; <http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/snark/>; snark@zetnet.co.uk. See also the review "Snarkology" on p. 11.

Rediscovered Lewis Carroll Puzzles newly compiled and edited by Edward Wakeling. New York: Dover \$4.95. ISBN 0-486-28861-7.

The Workhorse Library series of Electronic Paperbacks for OS/2, Windows 3.x, and Windows/95 has just published an *AW* on CD-ROM with "24 new, original pieces of artwork done by Lucy Gaynor, an international children's artist. The voice characterizations are by Braden Bell, an actor and a children's drama instructor." You can view the text, look at the illustrations, or have the text read out loud to you (or your child). \$15 from <http://www.qvision.net>; or info@qvision.net. 1-891595-04-0;

An Embarrassment of Corpses by Alan Beechey. St. Martin's Press, "The book begins with two writers of children's books playing 'The Hunting of The Snark'. One dies in Trafalgar Square's fountain, and the other delves into solving his death. Not only does this witty, punny and delightful tale have several references to Carroll, the feeling you have when reading it is almost like falling down the rabbit hole." - Diane Plumley. 0-312-16936-1; <http://www.concentric.net/~Alanbee/home.htm>.

Lewis Carroll: Selected Poems edited by Keith Silver. This includes the well-known pieces as well as a biographical and critical introduction by Silver. Carcanet Books, UK 1996 trade paperback at £7. Available in the US from Paul & Company. c/o PCS Data Processing. 360 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001. \$13 for the trade paper edition.

Correspondents

The Brideshead Generation: Evelyn Waugh and his Friends, Humphrey Carpenter, Houghton Mifflin, 1990, 0-395-44142-0, pp. 158-169 explores Waugh's thesis that *AW* is a "sustained mockery of religion". Carpenter refers to his own article "*Alice and the Mockery of God*", in *Secret Gardens: the Golden Age of Children's Literature*, 1985.

Too Cool, Gene Sculatti, ed., St. Martin's Press, 1993, 0-312-08915-5, a guide to "the most out-of-sight" cool (in the beatnik sense) products begins and ends with pictorial and other references to Alice, a.k.a. "Sweet Alyssum", including the White Rabbit wearing shades, man.

Alternative Alices: Visions and Revisions of Lewis Carroll's Alice Books, and anthology edited by Carolyn Sigler, University of Kentucky. Twenty imitations, revisions, or parodies, some excerpted, along with their illustrations, and all written between 1869 and 1930, are brought together in this collection. The medley is a great service to the reader, but marred by Ms. Singer's personal agenda which comes forth in her introductory comments, as she seems to feel that "political correctness" of later spin-offs makes them superior to the original. \$34, 0-8131-2028-4 hc, or \$20, 0-8131-0932-9 pb; 663 S. Limestone St., Lexington KY 40508. 800.839.6855.

The Classic Tales Maze Book, by Juliet and Charles Snape, \$13 from Harry N. Abrams. It's a large softcover book with mazes inspired by various children's books, including a faithful journey through *Wonderland*. 0810927551.

New Publications of the Lewis Carroll Society (UK):

Diaries of Lewis Carroll, edited by Edward Wakeling. The LCS is publishing the uncut diaries of Lewis Carroll. These have never before been published in their entirety. The first 3 volumes may be purchased at a cost of

£25 each. It is anticipated that the set will consist of 9 volumes. *Volume 4* is now available.

Lewis Carroll - Bibliophile contains facsimile reproductions of all known sale catalogues of Carroll's library, fully indexed with a major new essay on Carroll's collection of books. £21.

All LCS publications, above, can be ordered from Mitchell Templeton, 84 Spottiswoode Street, Edinburgh, EH9 1 DJ, UK. Prices shown are postage free in UK, plus 10% in mainland Europe, plus 15% elsewhere. E-mail Mark Richards at 100344.1550@compuserve.com for further information.

Articles

"Husserl, Wittgenstein and the Snark: Internationality and Social Naturalism" by Grant Gillette, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. LVII, No. 2, June 1997. "...examines the general philosophical characteristics of thoughts of objects from the perspective of Husserl's *hyle*, *noesis*, and *noema*..."

"The 'Ozification' of American Children's Fantasy Films: *The Blue Bird*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and *Jumanji*" by Joel D. Chaston, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1997. "Ozification" is the borrowing of specific elements from the 1939 film which tend to overlay the narrative features of Hollywood films onto children's texts.

"Pauvre Alice... sur le monde fou où la jeta Lewis Carroll" by Roger Perron in *Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, Vol. LXI, April - June 1997.

"The construction and reduction of strong snarks" by P.A. Sinclair, *Discrete Mathematics*, Vol. 167/168 April 1997.

"'Let it Stop There': A Statement Paper on the Suppression of the 'Wasp in a Wig'", Cassandra Morris' graduate school thesis is available through inter-library loan from Southwest Texas State University (San Marcos, TX); <http://members.aol.com/DDMorris/carroll.html>.

"Alice Through the Zodiac" by sci-fi author Everett F. Bleiler, in *The Washington Post*, 8/3/97 attempts to fit *TTLG* into the typology of the zodiac. He begins by making a huge case for the fact that each of the books have 12 chapters — that Carroll deliberately inserted the one-sentence Chapter XI in *TTLG* just for this effect — and then conveniently misses the fact that the "Wasp in the Wig" destroys his argument. As usual with such humorless exegeses, huge liberties are taken to fit square pegs into round holes. "Hjckrrh!"

"The Fallout From Wonderland: The Influence of Lewis Carroll on Modern SF/Fantasy" by Melanie Miller Fletcher. http://www.io.com/~hoosier/carroll_page.html.

The Ultimate Collectible?

The house known as The Chestnuts, Guildford, Surrey, which Dodgson rented from 1868-1898, is on currently on sale for £750,000.

Art and Artifacts

A limited edition of three sets of humorous soft sculptures by Claire Herz (\$750 for the set of four pieces: Alice (as a bear), Caterpillar on a Mushroom, "Bunny Blanc" and "Just Rabbit", 9" - 16") is available from The Rocking Horse Gallery, 803 Caroline Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401; 540.371.1894; Fax: 540.374.1663; rhgbears@aol.com; or visit <http://www.onewdesign.com/beargallery/wonder.html>

An embroidery kit, #FT005, of Alice and the White Rabbit from Oklahoma Embroidery Supply & Design, 301 S. Bryant B-100, Edmond, OK 73034; 405.359.2741; Fax: 405.359.1083; sales@oesd.com; visit <http://www.oesd.com/packs101/fx550005.htm>

Some lovely intaglio engravings from "Through The Looking Glass: The Etching and Engraving World of John Anthony Miller" have Alician themes. The original etchings and engravings are rendered on 16 gauge copperplate and are hand-printed in an edition of 100 to 250 prints, costing \$80 per piece. He is

also offering a free "poster (12"x 18" on cream paper stock) showing an enlargement of "'Alice, The White Rabbit and Mad Hatter' from my 'Fantasy' engraving; from my last (and final!) art exhibit which occurred at The Carnegie Art Museum. Send me your address and I will send you a signed poster. I can inscribe it to you if you wish. Sent anywhere in the world, postpaid. I have vowed that I will never do a public showing again, so this will be (is) some kind of collectible." 805.641.3844 or 805.648.2429; Fax: 805.641.1246; phantom@phantoms.com; <http://www.phantoms.com/~phantom/>

Michael Osterweil's 40 witty, jewel-toned watercolor paintings of the Alice characters in an Elizabethan rendering are being offered to the public in the form of greeting cards and art-quality posters. Michael was born in Berlin in 1932 and now lives in Tempe, AZ. To date, two collections of portraits have been completed, and a third is currently in process. There are forty paintings in the *AW* collection. His imagination and technique are astounding. Highly recommended! The cards are 5" x 7". Full set of 8 cards: \$16. Or twelve of one image - \$24. The four art-quality posters (20" x 28") commemorate the 1998 Lewis Carroll Centennial. They are \$25 each from MC Art Studio, Inc., P.O. Box 1027, Tempe, AZ 85280; 602.921.7159 or 888.921.7159; Fax: 602.921.7295; mcart@doitnow.com; check out <http://www.mcart.com/>

"Originals by LE" is offering a gallery of fine miniature, hand-sculpted original *AW* figurines, 2"-3½" tall, each made individually, for around \$50 apiece. They are "made to be worn as jewelry, but they can easily just set on your shelf." <http://www.nidlink.com/~cdawebdesign/alice.html>; cdawebdesign@nidlink.com (attention: Leigh); Leigh Saunders, 1218 Maple Ave, Coeur d'Alene ID 83814; 208.667.6556. There's a holiday special on pricing, too.

A "Book of Ornaments" (\$10), die-cut note cards (\$13) and a set of magnets (\$11) from the Metropolitan Museum of Art catalog. 800.468.7386.

A Disneyesque Cheshire Cat "Computer Topper" (\$13), Mad Hatter garden sculpture (\$50) from What on Earth, 800.945.2552.

Handcrafted tree ornaments from the Polonaise collection. 800.863.XMAS.

"Mad Hatter Tea Party" bookends made of hand-painted resin. \$60 from the Smithsonian catalogue. 800.322.0344. SICUSTSVC@aol.com; 7955 Agnus Court, Springfield VA 22153.

"MagicCloth Doll Collection", a magnetized cloth "paper doll" with travel case and 10 outfits, has *AW* for \$14. Also the have an *AW* miniature book and porcelain tea service for \$19. Dollmasters. 800.966.3655.

The Tenniel pencil sketches for the books are on a series of postcards from the Battledore Collection. \$10 for a set of 10 from Modern Postcard Sales, P.O.Box 644, Elkhart, IN 46515. 219.264.0013.

For next Halloween, children's costumes of Alice and the Mad Hatter (sizes 4-14) are available for \$40 from Lillian Vernon, Virginia Beach VA 23479. 800.285.5555.

Steinbach Nutcrackers has just introduced a new series of *AW* nutcrackers. The first one, the Mad Hatter (\$230) is available from Across The Bridge, 210 North Santa Cruz, Los Gatos CA. 800.813.9585; bridge@value-link.com; <http://www.value-link.com/bridge.html>. Also from <http://www.nussknackerhaus.com> or the Hammacher Schlemmer catalog: 800.543.3366.

A 1998 *AW* wall calendar (\$10), pocket calendar (\$7), laminated magnets (\$2 each), car window signs such as "I Brake for Jabberwockys" and "Save the Snarks" (\$5 each) from Parallel Universe Productions, P.O. Box 270, Orlando, FL 32802; <http://www.pup.high-speed.com>.

Events

"Alice in Opera Land" will be presented again this year by Donald Pippin's Pocket Opera in Walnut Creek CA on December 13th; in Mountain View on the 14th; and in San Francisco on December 20th and 21st. Alice learns about the world of opera, sung in English, fea-

turing the music of Offenbach, Verdi, Rossini, Mozart and so on. For children or adults. 415.575.1102; PocketOpera@aol.com.

AW by the Arizona Youth Theater in Tuscon through December 21, 520.790.0844.

"Lewis Carroll in Greenwich Village", a lecture by Dr. Morton Cohen given at the Bobst Library of NYU Nov. 20th, 1997.

AW by the Gorilla Repertory Theatre Company toured various Manhattan venues, including parking lots and parks, this autumn, winding up as part of the First Annual New York International Fringe Festival. Vince Lanza saw it and called it "faithful and rambunctious".

An exhibition of *AW* photo-illustrations by Carmela Lobet, Nov. 14th 1997 to Jan. 8th 1998 in the Center Forum Can Baste in Barcelona, Spain.

Maria Bodmann's "Bali & Beyond" is a performing arts company inspired by the cultures of Indonesia. The Los Angeles based ensemble tours nationwide, featuring a variety of music, theater, and educational presentations. One of their presentations is "Alice in the Shadows" an *AW* rendering done in Balinese shadow-puppet style, with "rock classics and original songs" in the background. Booking info: 818.768.7696; gamelan@balibeyond.com; <http://www.balibeyond.com/gamelan/alice.html>

The "Cultural Curios" exhibit at the Morgan Library in Manhattan (running through January 4th of next year) contains literary objets, including Alice Liddell's beige quilted purse with blue embroidery, and Charles Lutwidge Dodgson's pocket watch.

Hand Bookbinders of California's 25th Anniversary Exhibition featured Eleanore Ramsey's binding of the Cheshire Cat Press' *AW* from the collection of Sandor Burstein.

Vince Collins' 1982 cartoon *Malice in Wonderland* was shown at the Forbidden Animation screenings at the Red

Vic in San Francisco on November 16th and 17th. It qualified for this exhibition by having being banned by a feminist convention.

"Le Snark", *adapté et joué par Fabrice Eberhard* was shown on French television on 24 September. A CD with the printed text is available from Once Again Productions, 01 47 08 64 75 phone; 01 47 16 12 13 fax; laval@club-internet.fr.

"Aliza in Wonderland" poster from the "History of the Jewish Child" exhibition features a b/w illustration from the 1940 Hebrew version and is available for \$10 from Friends of the Library, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 3080 Broadway, New York NY 10027; 212.678.8000; <http://www.jtsa.edu>

The Syracuse University Library, Special Collections, is the recipient of the generous donation of the 700 piece Carroll collection of Kathleen ("Kay") Rossman. A reception was held on October 16th.



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President: Joel Birenbaum, joel.birenbaum@lucent.com

Secretary: Ellie Luchinsky, eluchin@erols.com

Editor: Mark Burstein, wrabbit@worldpassage.net

Lewis Carroll Society of North America Home Page: <http://www.lewiscarroll.org/>

